

Message Text

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ORIGIN AF-04

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SS-14 PM-03 SP-02 L-01 INR-05 SAJ-01

EUR-08 SSO-00 INRE-00 /039 R

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AF/W-TWMSMITH

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O R 152344Z MAR 76
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY LOME IMMEDIATE
INFO AMEMBASSY COTONOU

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 062722

STADIS//////////
LIMDIS

E.O. 11652:GDS

TAGS: PFOR, DM, TO, US

SUBJECT: MEETING WITH EYADEMA

REF:LOME 552

1. DEPT CONCURS THAT YOU SHOULD TAKE OPPORTUNITY OF NEXT
MEETING WITH EYADEMA TO EXPLAIN PRESENT STATUS OF US-BENIN
RELATIONS. SUGGEST YOU MAKE FOLLOWING POINTS:

--SINCE BENIN/DAHOMEY BECAME MARXIST-LENINIST IN NOVEMBER
1974 USG HAS HAD INCREASING DIFFICULTY IN CONDUCTING
BUSINESS WITH GOVERNMENT. LONGSTANDING PROBLEMS INCLUDE
NATIONALIZATION OF ASSETS OF AMERICAN FIRMS FOR WHICH NO
COMPENSATION PAID (AS OPPOSED TO RELATIVELY PROMPT COM-
PENSATION PAID BY TOGOLESE IN 1974 CTMB NATIONALIZATION),
ATTACKS ON US IN MEDIA AND INTERNATIONAL FORA, NOTICE TO
VACATE CHANCERY BY OCTOBER 26, 1976, AND TREATMENT OF
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AMBASSADOR ENGLE BY RANKING MEMBERS OF BENINESE GOVERN-

MENT.

--AMBASSADOR ENGLE LEFT COTONOU FEBRUARY 15 ON CONSULTATIONS FOLLOWING A PARTICULARLY EGREGIOUS BREACH OF DIPLOMATIC CONDUCT BY THE GPRB. SINCE THAT DATE, THERE HAVE BEEN NO SIGNS OF PROGRESS ON THE SEVERAL OUTSTANDING PROBLEMS IN OUR BILATERAL RELATIONS. TO DATE, THE GPRB HAS NOT DEMONSTRATED THAT IT IS PREPARED TO TREAT USG REPRESENTATIVES IN MANNER BEFITTING NATION WITH WHOM WE DESIRE FRIENDLY RELATIONS.

-- USG WISHES TO CONTINUE TO ASSIST BENIN'S ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, IF COOPERATION IS STILL POSSIBLE WITH GPRB. OUR ASSISTANCE TO BENIN IS MAINLY IN THE FORM OF PROJECTS THAT COULD HAVE SUBSTANTIAL REGIONAL IMPACT. THE NEW BRIDGE OVER THE LAGOON AT COTONOU, FOR EXAMPLE, WOULD IMPROVE CIRCULATION OF GOODS AND PEOPLE ALONG THE COAST IN THE BIGHT OF BENIN. THEREFORE, IT IS IN BEST INTERESTS OF PEOPLE OF WHOLE REGION THAT US-BENIN RELATIONS IMPROVE.

2. IF PRESSED FOR COMMENT ON FUTURE OF US-BENIN RELATIONS, YOU SHOULD REPLY THAT ENTIRE RANGE OF PROBLEMS WITH BENIN NOW UNDER REVIEW BY DEPT.

3. DEPT WILL BE INTERESTED IN ANY ASSESSMENT FYADEMA MAY HAVE OF CURRENT DEVELOPMENTS IN BENIN AND THEIR POSSIBLE RELEVANCE TO EVOLUTION OF US-BENIN RELATIONS DESCRIBED ABOVE. KISSINGER

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptoning: Z
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: FOREIGN RELATIONS, NATIONALIZATION, ANTIAMERICAN FEELING, DIPLOMATIC MISSIONS, DIPLOMATIC DISCUSSIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 15 MAR 1976
Decaption Date: 28 MAY 2004
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: GolinoFR
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976STATE062722
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: GADIES:DFF
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760097-0862
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760359/aaaabzze.tel
Line Count: 89
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ORIGIN AF
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: STADIS, LIMDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: STADIS, LIMDIS
Reference: 76 LOME 552
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: GolinoFR
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 22 JUN 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <22 JUN 2004 by greeneet>; APPROVED <23 JUN 2004 by GolinoFR>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: MEETING WITH EYADEMA
TAGS: PFOR, DM, TO, US, (EYADEMA, GNASSINGBE)
To: LOME
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006